

FACTORS INFLUENCING ONLINE IMPULSE
PURCHASE BEHAVIOUR AMONG GENERATION Y IN
MALAYSIA: A STUDY ON STUDENTS IN SELANGOR

BY

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ABSTRACT

Recently, online impulse purchase among young generation has increased dramatically. A multitude of evidences show that impulse purchase is widespread online, but relatively limited knowledge on this phenomenon is yet available. As a result, users of online shopping sites in Malaysia have become one of the major challenges for companies involved in e-commerce. The main purpose of this study is to increase the understanding with regards to the relative factors influencing online impulse purchase behavior among Generation Y in Malaysia. Stimulus-organism-response (SOR) model is employed. A total of 250 questionnaires were distributed among students at Selangor in Malaysia. Partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) was employed to conduct Confirmatory Factor Analysis for assessing Measurement model and Structural model for hypotheses testing. The findings of the study reveal that perceived enjoyment has a significant positive influence on online impulse purchase behavior. The findings further reveal that, variety seeking has significant positive influence on perceived enjoyment and online impulse purchase behavior. However, website quality is found to have no significant positive influence on perceived enjoyment and online impulse purchase behavior. Findings from this study will further help service providers, entrepreneur and opportunistic people as well as customers. This study will produce enhanced understanding in formulating digital marketing and customer relationship strategies through online platform. In addition, students and academicians can benefit from this study in the context of Generation Y in Malaysia.

خلاصة البحث

في الآونة الأخيرة، زاد الاندفاع في عملية الشراء عبر الإنترنت بين جيل الشباب بشكل كبير. وهناك العديد من الأدلة التي تبين ارتفاع معدلات الشراء عبر الشبكة العنكبوتية، ولكن المعرفة المحدودة نسبياً حول هذه الظاهرة لا تزال متاحة. ونتيجة لذلك، أصبح مستخدمو مواقع التسوق عبر الإنترنت في ماليزيا أحد التحديات الرئيسية للشركات العاملة في مجال التجارة الإلكترونية. الغرض الرئيسي من هذه الدراسة هو زيادة التفاهم فيما يتعلق بالعوامل النسبية التي تؤثر على اندفاع السلوك نحو الشراء على الإنترنت بين الجيل Y في ماليزيا باستخدام نموذج الاستجابة للتحفيز - الكائن الحي (SOR) حيث تم توزيع 250 استبيانه على الطلاب في سلاجور في ماليزيا. وتم استخدام نمذجة المعادلة الهيكلية الجزئية وتحليل العوامل المؤكدة (PLS-SEM) لتقييم نموذج القياس والنموذج الهيكلي لاختبار الفرضيات. وتكشف نتائج الدراسة أن التمتع المتصور له تأثير إيجابي كبير على اندفاع السلوك نحو الشراء عبر الإنترنت. وتكشف النتائج كذلك أن تنوع الفحص له تأثير إيجابي كبير على التمتع المتصور ودافع سلوك الشراء على الإنترنت. ومع ذلك، تم العثور على جودة الموقع الإلكتروني ليس لها تأثير إيجابي كبير على التمتع المتصور ودافع سلوك الشراء عبر الإنترنت. وستساعد النتائج التي تتوصل إليها هذه الدراسة مقدمي الخدمات ومنظمي المشاريع والأشخاص الانتهازيين وكذلك العملاء. وستنتج هذه الدراسة عن فهم معزز في صياغة استراتيجيات التسويق الرقمي والعلاقات مع العملاء من خلال منصة إلكترونية. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، يمكن للطلاب والأكاديميين الاستفادة من هذه الدراسة في ضوء الجيل Y في ماليزيا.

APPROVAL PAGE

I certify that I have supervised and read this study and that in my opinion, it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Master of Science (Marketing).

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted as a whole for any other degrees at IIUM or other institutions.

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This dissertation is dedicated to my beloved parents and my younger brother

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This study is about consumers' online impulsive buying behavior in Malaysia. Online impulsive buying behavior is discussed in this chapter along with the current situation of online buying in Malaysia. Since the introduction of the Internet in the early 1980s, it has gained a rapid growth in terms of usage rate. The growth of Internet is mainly because of its unique characteristics of interactivity, flexibility and personalization. Internet is the best way to communicate with people, involving electronic trade, entertainment and educational activities (Koyuncu & Lien, 2003). Burke (2002) found that, the reason of involvement in online channels is because of their virtual stores layouts and their atmospherics that trigger the shopping habits. It has been founded that, online medium simplifies the impulse buying behavior (Li, Kuo & Russell, 2000). At the same time impulse buying opportunities are strikingly rising due to the change of economic and social changes such as 24-hours retailing (Dittmar & Drury, 2000). A few recent studies strived to investigate impulse buying online by identifying website features and quality that could be the supplement of product and promotion. External stimuli possibly promote online impulse buying (Madhavaram & Laverie, 2004) including the formats of media (Adelaar, Chang, Lancendorfer, Lee & Morimoto, 2003) and task related cues (Parboteeah, Valacich , & Wells, 2009).

According to Sullivan (2019), millennial or Gen Y is a group of young people growing up in a rapidly changing world. They are characterized by adapting new technologies, new shopping trends, motivation, values and experience because technological convergence has influenced their daily lives for the most part. Gen Y

has historically been the first generation to rise in the digital age who plugs themselves into device all the time.

Several studies have been done on impulsive purchase. The current study focuses on finding out what other factors influence customers to purchase online without prior planning. This study helps in analyzing how customers are influenced by external and internal stimuli to involve in online impulse purchase in Malaysia.

1.2 BACKGROUND OF STUDY

According to Chua et al. (2006) the development of Internet has become popular among all people around the world. People's needs and wants are on the rise. The expected growth in e-commerce is due to a rapid increase in the number of personal computers in Malaysia and an increase in the proportion of personal computers that are hooked up to the Internet every year. This offers Malaysians more opportunities to do business and shop online (Legard, 1998). Cheapest mobile phones with Internet access, Internet connection cost with affordable prices are the revolutionary upheaval in the globe. On the other hand, Internet is not only popular for social networking or connecting with people, it is also a useful platform for marketers to promote their products where physical stores are no longer required to be decorative. Today, each and every product is sold online. Malaysia is a developing country with its potentials in marketing from both local and international companies. These companies are trying to examine the unique characteristics of each customer by offering different types of products and services. For example: products of head to toe, foods and beverage and air tickets.

According to Mangal and Ganbolor (2019), manufacturers nowadays are more interested in using online shopping websites to sell their products or services, and

websites offer wide varieties of items for customers. So, design is a key factor for increasing customers who revisit and spend time on websites. Apart from design, the amount of information about products and services offered by the websites is crucial too (Ahmad & Khan, 2017). According to Ludin and Cheng (2014), customers tend to have higher satisfaction if they feel the website quality is good whilst shopping online. On the contrary, they may be dissatisfied if they evaluate the shopping website as a low quality website while shopping online. So, the primary goal of the website is to attract potential customers by generating information content about their products which is important for the implementation. (Pandey & Chawla, 2016).

Other than website quality, Amos, Holmes and Keneson (2014) suggested that, online impulse purchases among consumers depend on variety seeking behavior. Even though material purchases are being highlighted in most of the studies on variety seeking (Kahn, 2002) but Shah and Alter (2014) suggest variety seeking as consumers' experiential purchases. However, internal stimuli (i.e. personality traits) and external stimuli (i.e. store-related factors) have also been argued to influence online impulsive purchasing (Badgaiyan & Verma, 2014). Buyers search for a varieties and variations that may be a major reason for brand switching and buying impulse (Hawkins et al., 2007). According to Sharma et al. (2010) study, variety seeking behavior has been found to be correlated with purchasing impulsive.

Floh and Madlberger (2013) found, based on their study, that shopping enjoyment mediates the relationship between e-store characteristics and online impulse purchase behavior. Shopping enjoyment is associated with short-term emotional responses which can be defined as satisfaction, excitement, happiness and dominance (Koufaris et al., 2002). Shopping enjoyment is defined as the personality trait of an individual who discovers shopping with more enjoyment and enjoyable

qualities than other consumers (Odekerken-Schröder et al., 2003). Pleasure and arousal are both combined to describe excitement that may increase the tendency to approach, unplanned purchases and hedonic shopping value (Babin & Darden, 1996).

According to Jeffrey and Hodge (2007), customers buy impulsively by assessing several aspects, such as, easiness or no delivery efforts, lack of social pressures, easy purchase of products and easy access of products. It is important to have in-depth understanding on consumer buying behavior because it is crucial for all e-commerce practitioners to understand the online buying behavior of consumers.

Based on a survey conducted by Wong (2014), he found that 91% of online users in Malaysia particularly purchased their products online in regular basis, 54% users purchased their products at least once per month and 26% purchased their products online once a week (Wong, 2014).

Another survey conducted by Kumar (2013), the number of online shopping in Malaysia is increasing. It is found that eight out of ten are involved in online shopping in 2013, with online shopping, consumers are able to buy their products or services without physically visiting a given retail store (Kumar, 2013). However, Rook (1987) conducted his study on impulse buying and described impulse buying as a sudden purchasing behavior without considering the choice alternatives and information that is required.

The present study mainly focuses on Gen Y which is the term used to refer to individuals who were born between the 1980's to the early 1990's (Muda, Mohd & Hassan, 2016). However, Gen Y is technologically advanced as they grow up in the information age and are prone to daily use of the media. It is believed to be the largest group of people who use the Internet as a shopping channel. Gen Y represents 40% of

Malaysia's population and is the largest segment. It is also Malaysia's largest segment of the Internet population based on age.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Impulsive purchasing behavior is a phenomenon induced by external and internal factors. External factors include window display (Ayub & Zafar, 2018; Nishanov & Ahunjonov, 2016; Cohen et al., 2015), salesperson or staff (Ayub & Zafar, 2018) while internal factors are associated with personality and psychological factors. Muruganantham and Bhakat (2013) explored impulse purchase behavior using external and internal stimuli which indicates direct relationship with impulse purchase. Muruganantham and Bhakat (2013) suggested that, impulse purchase behavior could be determined further by applying four dimensional frameworks, two of which are external and internal stimuli. However, external stimuli are considered to be most challenging implications on the consumers' impulse buying. Due to the technological advancement of the retail formats, external factors may affect impulse purchase behavior.

In terms of online impulsive purchase quality of the website is important because prior studies reveal that the aesthetic appearance of website is crucial to attract customers and stimulate impulsive behavior (Clemes, Gan & Zhang, 2014; Turkyilmaz, Erdem & Uslu, 2015). However, Hashmi, Attiq and Rasheed (2019) argued that, consumers' online impulse purchase behaviors are not affected directly by external factors instead consumers have the pleasure and enjoy using a particular website. Customers purchase products immediately if they are pleased and aroused. Octavia (2016) posited that, affective reaction such as enjoyment creates direct relationship with online impulse purchase.

Little attention has been paid to research that examines online impulse purchase behavior among young generation because the consumption practices among Generation Y differ from previous generations. Due to the accelerated growth of technology, buying patterns among Gen Y are shifting towards online (Bilgihan, 2016). Young consumers (Gen Y) nowadays seek information online, based on which purchases are being performed (Dalziel & de Klerk, 2018). Zhang et al. (2018) reported that information quality and visual appeal are the most important factors that affect online impulse purchase significantly. Apart from information searching, variety seeking behaviors among Gen Y consumers are important to be studied (Dalziel & de Klerk, 2018).

In Malaysia's context, there is deficiency of comprehensive research regarding the enjoyment of Gen Y (Wong, Osman, Jamaluddin & Yin-Fah, 2012). As enjoyment could bring impact to the consumers shopping experience and motivation, it may affect consumers purchase behavior (Floh & Madlberger, 2013). Verhagen and van Dolen (2011) empirically found that there is a positive relationship between enjoyment and online impulse purchase behavior. Consumers' affective reaction occurs based on particular stimulation and "attempt to purchase" depends on shopping enjoyment. In addition, highly dissatisfied customers may not attempt to purchase because such dissatisfaction influences their behavior. Thus, the impulsive purchase behavior declines. Wong, Osman, Jamaluddin and Yin-Fah (2012) posited that perceived enjoyment to be one of the key emotional determinants that triggers behavior, yet it is important to understand Malaysian young adults' emotional state.

1.4 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The primary objective of this study is to understand the variables that impact customer's impulse buying behavior. For the purpose of this study, two variables were chosen namely independent variables which are website quality and variety seeking; and a dependent variable which is online impulse purchase behavior. However, perceived enjoyment mediates the relationship between independent and dependent variable. The dependent variable is considered to be primary interest for this research. In this study, impulse purchase behavior is chosen to be the dependent variable. On the other side, independent variables are chosen to be impacted by the dependent variable either positively or negatively. For the purpose of this study, two independent variables are tested; they are website quality and variety seeking. These two independent variables and one mediator are tested to find out whether it significantly influences the dependent variable.

Specific objectives of this study were:

1. To examine the relationship between website quality and perceived enjoyment.
2. To examine the relationship between website quality and online impulse purchase behavior among Gen Y in Malaysia.
3. To examine the relationship between variety seeking and perceived enjoyment.
4. To examine the relationship between variety seeking and online impulse purchase behavior among Gen Y in Malaysia.
5. To examine the relationship between perceived enjoyment and online impulse purchase behavior among Gen Y in Malaysia.

6. To examine whether perceived enjoyment mediates the relationship between website quality and online impulse purchase behavior.
7. To examine whether perceived enjoyment mediates the relationship between variety seeking and online impulse purchase behavior.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Based on the problem stated previously, given below are the guided questions for this study:

1. What is the relationship between website quality and perceived enjoyment?
2. What is the relationship between website quality and online impulse purchase behavior among Gen Y in Malaysia?
3. What is the relationship between variety seeking and perceived enjoyment?
4. What is the relationship between variety seeking and online impulse purchase behavior among Gen Y in Malaysia?
5. What is the relationship between perceived enjoyment and online impulse purchase behavior among Gen Y in Malaysia?
6. Does perceived enjoyment mediate the relationship between website quality and online impulse purchase behavior?
7. Does perceived enjoyment mediate the relationship between variety seeking and online impulse purchase behavior?

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study was conducted to focus on the key factors that lead to consumer's utmost satisfaction on impulsive purchase online in Malaysia. This research examined how stimulation environment affects the perceived enjoyment of human behavior and that enjoyment leads consumers to determine the purchasing behavior. Nowadays, online platforms in Malaysia such as lazada, zalora, mudah are playing a vital role by providing varieties of products that lead to customer's willingness to buy impulsively. The success of online impulsive purchasing depends on how products are being assorted and stored simultaneously in different online platforms. By so doing, consumers are allowed the chance to benchmark the products and may intend to purchase impulsively.

In this context, this research tries to emphasize on major factors that directly or indirectly affect consumers' willingness to purchase impulse online. By investigating the key factors that have the greatest effect on online impulsive purchase, online platformers may develop a selling strategy in order to survive in the existing market. This research will enable marketers to think before they expand their products line in online setting.

Furthermore, the study is conducted to assist marketers who have been going through difficult times trying to survive in the existing markets due to the implementation of electronic commerce. Moreover, the study is conducted for opportunistic entrepreneurs as well those who intendeds to expand their business through electronic commerce.

The majority of young generations are employed in various organizations. Due to the limited times for physical shopping, they rely on online shopping. Spending time in physical stores nowadays is difficult for young generations, so they spend

most of their time using electronic commerce websites to make their purchases. It is a great advantage for opportunists to find the gap and shift towards electronic commerce in order to sustain in the present market place.

1.7 OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

This research includes five chapters. Chapter one presents an overview of online purchasing behavior along with the current situation of online purchasing behavior among Malaysians. The chapter also highlights opportunities for online platforms or marketers to expand their trade online. Moreover, the chapter also discusses the problem statement among debt trap issue among Malaysians, research objective and significance of this study. The second chapter is literature review which reviewed impulsive buying, factors that affect consumer's impulse buying online such as website quality and variety seeking.

The third chapter focuses on the research methodology, research framework and hypothesis, sampling plan, questionnaire development and data analysis. Chapter four is about the results of study. The results and findings are acquired from primary data. Finally, chapter five is followed by summery of findings, and the contribution of this study for further research and a discussion.

1.8 CONCLUSION

This chapter shapes the brief summary of the research project. It described as the basic foundation for this research study. It intelligibly defined the problem statement which included current online impulsive buying problem, research background, research objectives and research questions, hypothesis of the study, significance of the study

and outline of the study. The following chapter reviews the literature which also relates to this study.